

Job Announcement Number: EPA-Exec-2017-0004

Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

October 16, 2016

Application of:

By:

### **QUALIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS**

- ❖ Served in multiple senior leadership positions in the Federal government for 10 years
- ❖ Have overseen up to 154 employees and have overseen an operating budget of \$150 million and an estimated \$2.0 billion in federal grants
- ❖ Hired, developed, counseled and assessed performance for a diverse group of individuals in four different division offices.
- ❖ Spokesperson for EPA at numerous environmental conferences
- ❖ Possess Secret Security Clearance

### **MANAGEMENT POSITIONS**

Deputy Director of Water Division, GS-15 – March 2013 – Present

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Region 6, Dallas, TX

- Represented EPA, Region 6 during the 'Gold King Mine' spill to work alongside New Mexico's Environmental Department (NMED) senior management team in Santa Fe, NM.
- Oversee an operating budget of \$150 million
- Oversee approximately \$2.0 billion in federal grants to Region 6 states and tribes
- Lead a reorganization of the Water Division in support of federal budget cuts - abolished 3 supervisor positions and reduced five Branches to four.
- Spearheaded and implemented a paperless electronic routing system eliminating the need to hand carry documents from office to office for management concurrence.
- Exercise final authority for a full range of personnel management responsibilities relating to leave, disciplinary actions, promotions, and job announcements.
- Promote work force diversity, solicit interest for future employment opportunities and initiated a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Kingsville A&M (a minority college). MOA promotes EPA/College interaction, workshop partnership and project development.
- Provide leadership and direction to over 140 employees and 3 contractors in the Dallas, El Paso and New Orleans offices.

Acting Director of Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division, GS-15, December 2012 – March 2013 – EPA Region 6 Dallas, TX

- Managed the largest Federal implementation of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Air Permitting program in the nation.
- Received 75 GHG permit applications and issued 12 final permits.
- Provided resources to resolve the Texas Flexible Permit program, a program vital to the Texas economy.
- Increased FY2013 air commitments by 115% and adjusted resources accordingly.

Acting Deputy Director, Management Division, GS-15, June 2012- December 2012

- To address a region-wide payroll shortfall, utilized set aside resources intended to cover Voice Over Internal Protocol implementation for phone system. To offset that decision,

we revised the scope of work on the Region's Information Technology (IT) help desk contract.

- To address a region-wide payroll shortfall within the Regional budget, I evaluated each allocation of resources to identify any immediate excess and initiated a cost savings effort to reduce the Region's daily operations budget by 10 percent (\$389,107).
- Led a region-wide effort to eliminate a backlog of 84 Freedom of Information Requests and institutionalized a protocol to prevent such a backlog.
- Integrated best financial business practices within the Regional office curtailing the Region's IT hardware to help offset federal budget cuts.
- Initiated a switch to Voice Over Internet Protocol for the Region's phone system
- Integrated best financial business practices within the Regional office to accommodate federal budget cuts and sequestration.
- Promoted work force diversity and continuously solicit interest for future employment opportunities from minority colleges.

Associate Director of Air/Toxics Inspection and Coordination Branch, Enforcement Division, GS-15, June 2005 – June 2012

- Managed and led air, waste and water field inspections for the Region.
- Integrated field practices resulting in the largest number of water enforcement cases nationally.
- Integrated innovative field equipment (i.e. infrared camera) with a helicopter flyover to verify industry compliance. This effort resulted in over 10 administrative cases.
- Spearheaded the largest number of significant enforcement cases to the Department of Justice from noncompliant industrial sectors (Refineries, Chemical Plants, Power Plants)

## **EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS**

### **LEADING CHANGE**

As the new Air/Toxics, Inspection and Coordination (Air Enforcement) Branch Chief, I quickly realized my Branch had a poor reputation as a bad performer with our headquarters office. Headquarters believed the Air Enforcement Branch failed to communicate, investigate significant environmental problems and meet program commitments. I knew I had to change the organizations workforce culture and bring about strategic change.

- I hired a culturally diverse set of managers including an African American, a Hispanic and a Caucasian who each brought forth their unique perspectives.
- After coordination with the headquarters team, I created a clear Branch strategic vision and objectives. I led a series of meetings communicating my vision with supervisors and staff to ultimately get buy in.
- I led a Branch effort to generate a Strategic Plan to address Region-wide significant environmental compliance problems and integrated national enforcement priorities.
- To promote external awareness with the Strategic Plan, I shared and conducted monthly meetings with state and headquarters counterparts.
- With limited access to contracting funds, I thought 'outside the box', to arrange for industry and headquarters in-house training and plant tours.

- I revised performance agreements to support the new vision and to reflect new commitments.
- After initial resistance from staff, I began to notice a change in the staff's work practices. As Branch Chief, my efforts to change the reputation and culture of the branch began showing results.
  - Increased the number of air enforcement actions by 23%.
  - Contributed 21% of the national total for pounds of pollution reduced.
  - From the EPA 10 Region offices nationally, Region 6 alone was responsible for 18% (10% is average) of the enforcement cases.
- Bearing witness to the dramatic turn around and culture change, Headquarters noted in its "End of Year Report" that Region 6 *"...is certainly the most improved region. Regional management deserves credit for the active way it coordinates with Headquarters, engages with the States, and pushes the Region to align its work with the national air priorities. Regional management has also made some terrific hiring decisions..."*
- Today, the Air Branch is recognized for its outstanding performance.

### **LEADING PEOPLE**

As the Deputy Director of the Water Division, I faced an immediate challenge to redesign and implement the Division's organizational structure. Over the past 15 years decreasing federal budgets and attrition reduced the number of division employees from 170 to 144. I initiated, designed and implemented a reorganization taking the following actions.

- I established goals for the reorganization to create program efficiencies, realign program goals and reduce the number of supervisor position in the Division.
- I implemented an extensive outreach effort intended to promote input and leverage diverse ideas from Division groups, teams, and local Union.
- Ultimately, the extra outreach and communication minimized staff comments and concerns allowing for a smooth transition.
- I reduced five branches to four branches and merged small groups with similar program functions that created program efficiencies, and abolished three supervisor positions.
- To minimize conflict and promote team unity, I actively consulted and mentored employees, conducted outreach and post reorganization 'listening sessions'.
- I successfully prepared and designed a reorganization package over a six month period.
- Through my efforts and leadership the reorganization resulted in the most effective use of diverse human capital by applying resources and skill sets to top EPA priorities.

### **RESULTS DRIVEN**

As the Associate Director of the Air/Toxics, Inspection and Coordination Branch within the Region's Enforcement Division, I initiated and implemented a major enforcement initiative that produced high-quality results. Region 6 refineries produce almost 50% of the national petroleum products. My challenge as a manager with limited resources and staff expertise, was to reduce the amount of cancer causing air pollutants from these refineries. To help resolve this environmental and public health concerns, I utilized my position as a federal enforcement manager, and my Civil Engineering (Professional Engineer in Texas #71309) background to conduct the following.

- I strategically aligned a technical training program for staff to better understand the



technical nature and operations of a refinery.

- I collaborated and aligned, with Headquarters, a strategy with timelines to target refineries and address noncompliant refinery operations.
- I arranged and funded air inspectors with new field technology/equipment, including infrared cameras to best make decisive compliance determinations.
- On behalf of the Region, I argued technical differences with industry engineers and made decisive decision that led to enforcement settlements with penalties and pollutant reductions.
- Completed one of the single most significant enforcement initiatives conducted at the EPA yielding impressive results. Region 6 refineries were required to pay over \$20 million in cash penalties and \$1.6 billion on pollution control equipment.
- Reduced and accounted for over 90,000 tons per year of SO<sub>2</sub> emissions and over 40,000 tons per year of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from refineries (equivalent to taking 4 million cars off the busy highways).
- Under my leadership the Region 6 air enforcement group was considered one of the best air enforcement program in the nation to address refineries.

### **BUSINESS ACUMEN**

As Deputy Director for the Water Division, I faced an immediate challenge involving financial management. I led an effort to review and analyze claims from the EPA Inspector General (IG) regarding allegations that 'EPA Region 6 Mismanaged Coastal Restoration Funds' (aka Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act). The IG claimed the Water Division spent funds totaling \$780,791 on questionable costs, augmented the EPA annual appropriation, and overstated Coastal Restoration program costs. According to the IG this mismanagement of Coastal Restoration were a violation of appropriation law, and the IG suggested that Region 6 may have violated the Antideficiency Act.

- I led and managed a staff of financial experts to conduct a detailed analysis and evaluation of the IG's financial claims.
- I served as the decision maker whether expenditures questioned by the IG represented an appropriate or inappropriate use of Coastal Restoration funds.
- I concluded the Water Division lacked sufficient controls to ensure proper accountability and stewardship of the Coastal Restoration program and determined over \$300,000 needed to be returned to EPA's Coastal Restoration program.
- I established and institutionalized fiscal information technology management systems and protocols to prevent future misuse of Coastal Restoration funds.
- My efforts ensured Coastal Restoration funds were properly administrated in the past and going forward and confirmed the region's compliance with the Antideficiency Act.

### **BUILDING COALITIONS**

While serving as the Acting Water Division Director, a politically sensitive situation occurred when EPA contractors inadvertently caused three million gallons of polluted water (a plume of bright orange yellow color) to spill into a tributary of the Animas River and into the state of New Mexico. To coordinate EPA's initial assessment of water quality, public health impacts from the spill and to coordinate spill response activities, I was selected to be EPA's Regional representative by the Regional Administrator to work alongside New

Mexico's environmental senior management team, facilitating communication and sustaining a positive partnership.

New Mexico temporarily closed the river for public recreation use and the Governor declared a state of emergency, saying her administration was ready to take legal action against the EPA. To say the least coalitions between EPA and New Mexico had been strained.

- In New Mexico, I led contentious meetings sharing and discussing technical information (e.g. sampling plans, monitoring results, community outreach materials, press releases, quality action plans, etc.) with New Mexico's Water Director and management team.
- Under strained conditions, I strategically aligned federal and state environmental activities to monitor and assess the Animas/San Juan Rivers with New Mexico management.
- Under my leadership collaborated with stakeholders (including representatives from of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, as well from the Utes, Southern Utes and Navajo Nation Tribes) to influence/negotiate on-going monitoring and assessment of the Animas/San Juan River.
- Partnered with New Mexico to help stimulate development of an agreed upon unified Preparedness Plan.
- Collaborated (with New Mexico) and funded over \$685,000 of water and sediment sampling, monitoring and assessment activities demonstrating the Rivers returned to pre-spill conditions.
- Established and sustained positive working relationships/partnerships with New Mexico's management, while a political 'chess match' and lawsuit between New Mexico and EPA escalated.
- Regional Administrator publicly expressed great appreciation for a job well done. For the first time this segment of water is aggressively being monitored and assessed.

#### **OTHER PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS HELD**

Chief of the Air Enforcement Section, GS-14, Oct 2002-June 2005

Special Assistant to Deputy Regional Administrator, Larry Starfield, GS-13, Jan-Oct 2002

Air Enforcement Officer, GS-13, Oct 1998-Jan 2002

Permit Engineer, GS-13, Feb 1994- Oct 1998

#### **EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATES**

- College - Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering
- Registered Professional Engineer in the State of Texas
- Federal Executive Institute (FEI leadership training)

#### **REFERENCES**

William Honker, Director, EPA Region 6, Water Division, EPA, 214 665 3187

John Blevins, Director, Compliance Assurance & Enforcement Division, EPA 214 437 9810

Sam Coleman, Deputy Regional Administrator, EPA 214 665 3110